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To the Queen.

THE

Humble Supplication

Of Certain of Her Majesty's

Faithful and **Peaceable** Subjects,

CALLED

Protestant Dissenters,

In the Name of Themselves, and the Whole Body of the said *Protestant Dissenters* in *England*, in relation to the *Bill to prevent* SCHISM.

LONDON:

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TO THE QUEEN.

May it pleaſe Your Majeſty,

WE Your Majeſty's Faithful and Peaceable Subjects, the *Proteſtant Diſſenters* in *England*, being fully ſatisfy'd with the Eſtabliſhment of that bleſſed *Toleration* which we now enjoy, granted to us as the Conſequence of the late Happy *Revolution*, and by the Juſt and Exact Complyance of the Nation with the Declaration Exhibited by the late Prince of *Orange*; which *Toleration*, after his Highneſs Landing in *England*, was Preſented to the Parliament, and by them turn'd into a Law, in the Firſt Year of the Reign of the ſaid Prince; when, by the General Conſent of this Nation, he that was firſt our Glorious Deliverer, was afterwards declared our moſt Gracious Lord and Sovereign: And being

fully ſatisfy'd in our Minds, and quieted, with Reſpect to our frequent Apprehenſions, concerning the Continuance and Preſervation of the ſaid *Toleration*, by your Majeſty's Frequent and Gracious Aſſurances, as well from the Throne as upon other Occaſions, of Granting us your Royal Protection, *upon our Peaceable and Dutiful Behaviour*, and of your being reſolv'd to preſerve the ſaid *Toleration* INVIOLABLE: And being, nevertheleſs, juſtly alarm'd with the Accounts we receive, from all Hands, of the Implacable Hatred which our Enemies profeſs, and of their Reſolutions, if poſſible, to deprive us of the Benefit of the ſaid *Toleration*, which, however, without your Majeſty's Concurrence, we know, to our great Comfort, they have not Power to accompliſh; do therefore, with all Humility, caſt our ſelves at your Majeſty's Feet, and Flying to your Majeſty's known Juſtice, and your tender Care for the *Peace* and *Proſperity*, *Eaſe* and *Quiet* of all your Peaceable Subjects, Preſent this, our humble Supplication, to your Majeſty, moſt earneſtly Beſeeching your Majeſty to take our Caſe into your Royal Conſideration.

We, *Firſt*, humbly Repreſent to your Majeſty

Majeſty, That however we have been Slander'd and Injuriouſly Charged as Perſons of Irreligious Principles, *Schiſmatical*, and *Phanatical*; which Words of Reproach have been unjuſtly caſt upon us by our Enemies, and often unanſwerably Refuted; That yet we are a Body of your Majeſty's Subjects, who claim the Titles of *Chriſtians* and *Proteſtants*; and as ſuch, humbly alſo hope for a Share in your Majeſty's known Zeal for Propagating and Protecting the True *Chriſtian* and Reform'd *Proteſtant Religion* in all your Dominions; and alſo a Share in that Profeſſion which your Majeſty ſo publickly made at your Acceſſion to the Crown, of your ſincere Concern for the Good of all your Subjects, without Diſtinction.

We humbly Repreſent to your Majeſty, That we are alſo Chriſtians of the ſame Orthodox Faith, and of the ſame Univerſal Catholick Church of God, of which your Majeſty has always profeſs'd your ſelf a Member, and of which the *Church of England*, Eſtabliſh'd by the Laws of this Land, is declared to be a Branch; That we are the ſame with the ſaid *Church of England* in all *Doctrinal Articles*, and in every *Principle* Eſſential to the Life of

a *Chriſtian*, and Neceſſary to *Salvation*, having Sign'd and Subſcrib'd to every one of the *Doctrinal Articles* of the Confeſſion of Faith of the ſaid *Church of England*; and to all the other Articles of the ſaid Church, except TWO *only*, which TWO being allow'd and acknowledg'd, even by the Church her ſelf, and by the Laws of this Land, not to be Eſſential to Salvation, or that the Declining the ſame amounts to any Breaking off from the Unity of Faith, by which *Chriſtians* are Encorporated into Chriſt, the Head of the Univerſal *Catholick Church*, or from that Love, Unity, and Charity of *Chriſtians*, by which, all the Members of that Great Body are United to one another: WE, the ſaid *Diſſenters*, have thereupon been declared to be *no Schiſmaticks*, as we are maliciouſly Repreſented to your Majeſty to be by our Enemies.

We farther humbly Repreſent to your Majeſty, That being Conſcientiouſly Scrupulous of *Conformity* to ſome particular *Rites* and *Ceremonies* Eſtabliſhed in the *Church of England*, and which, however acknowledg'd to be indifferent in themſelves, are impos'd upon us as Terms of Communion; and not being able, without Sinning againſt our

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Conſciences, to grant the Power of the Church, or of the Civil Authority, to make thoſe Indifferent Things Neceſſary; as alſo being not able in all Things to agree to the *Epiſcopal Government* of the ſaid Church, as it is Eſtabliſhed by Law in your Majeſty's Dominions: For theſe Reaſons, WE HAVE BEEN OBLIG'D, in meer Obedience to the Sovereignty of Conſcience, *being Commanded to Obey God rather than Man, and being aſſur'd from God's Word, that whatſoever is not of Faith is Sin,* to DISSENT and SEPARATE our ſelves in Communion, tho' not in *Charity*, or in *Doctrine* from the ſaid Eſtabliſh'd Church; being in no Thing Enemies to the ſaid Church, or to its preſent Settlement, much leſs Dangerous on any Account whatſoever; but in all Things quietly Submitting to the Laws of the Land, to your Majeſty's Juſt Authority, and even to thoſe Powers granted to the ſaid *Church of England* as are not neceſſary to its Preſervation; not only freely and conſtantly Paying all Tythes, Duties, and Dues, which, by Law, are demanded of us for the Support of the Clergy, Univerſities, Schools, and Edifices of the ſaid Church; but in all Places, and on all Occa-

Occaſions, Freely and Voluntarily Contributing to all ſuch Collections, Charities, Free-Gifts, Subſcriptions, and Payments whatſoever, as are found Wanting for the Support and Relief of Lectures, Publick-Sermons, Charity-Schools, Decay'd or Defac'd Churches, and all ſuch Acts of Benevolence as are either by your Majeſty's Briefs, or the Recommendation of the Clergy, and Members of the Church, offer'd to us without any Diſtinction; and without Objecting, That it is for the Support of that Church which we do not Conform to, or Communicate with, and which too often, and on many Occaſions, profeſſedly denies to us the ſame Benevolence.

And we cannot but, with all Humility, inſiſt in our Claim of being receiv'd among the reſt of your Majeſty's Subjects Profeſſing the ſame *Chriſtian Religion* with us, and of being acknowledg'd as True and Orthodox *Chriſtians* by Them, and by your Majeſty, BECAUSE, to our great Comfort, we have been, as, of Right, we ought to be, frequently declar'd to be ſuch, as well by your Majeſty, and your glorious Predeceſſors, as alſo By and With the United Concurrence of the Lords Spi-

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ritual as well as Temporal, and Commons of this Realm, Aſſembled in Parliament, who have ſolemnly Pronounced and Enacted, That we, the *Diſſenters* aforeſaid, are no *Schiſmaticks*, and more eſpecially, becauſe in the Late Happy Conjunction of your Majeſty's Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*, and in the Exemplification and Ratification thereof in Parliament, commonly called, *The Act of the* UNION, the *Preſbyterian* Church of *Scotland*, whoſe Diſcipline, Worſhip, and Government is the ſame, *Mutatis Mutandis*, with what we profeſs, is acknowledg'd to be a Part of the True *Proteſtant* Religion; and the ſame is Settled, Confirmed, and Eſtabliſhed as the ſaid True *Proteſtant* Religion by the ſaid Act of UNION, and by the Parliament of *England*, of which your Majeſty is the Head, and of which the Lords Spiritual are ſo conſiderable a Branch, and to which your Majeſty has ſignify'd your Agreement, by your Royal Aſſent to the ſaid Act of UNION, the Biſhops of the *Church of England* Repreſenting the ſaid *Church of England* in the ſame Parliament, and to the ſame Act Concurring and Aſſenting: The Title of which Clauſe is thus, *For Securing* THE TRUE PROTESTANT

RELIGION AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT. And we humbly hope and believe, That in a Kingdom where the Church Government which we acknowledge is in one Part allow'd, and likewiſe the Doctrine and Church Government of that People is granted to be THE TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION, it ſhall never be ſuppos'd, that the ſame Doctrine and Government profeſſed by us in another Part of your Majeſty's Dominions, ſhall be deemed *Schiſmatical* and *Irreligious*.

Having, by theſe humble Repreſentations, made Room for our Application to, and Claim of, an equal Share in your Majeſty's Favour and Protection; and in Hopes that while we continue Loyal to, and *Quiet* and *Peaceable* under your Majeſty's Government, we ſhall enjoy our Part of the Common Bleſſings of your Reign: We, with all Humility, beg Leave to repreſent to your Majeſty a True State of our Caſe, as to our Dutiful and Quiet Behaviour to your Majeſty: And as to that Malicious and Unjuſt Charge of which our Enemies make ſo great Advantage againſt us, (*viz.*) Of our being Diſ-Affected to your Majeſty's Perſon and Government, and *Dangerous to the Church*

of

of England, both which are the Pretences, at preſent, made uſe of to expoſe us to the Reſentment of the Government, and, if poſſible, to diſpoſſeſs us of your Majeſty's Favour, and of the Liberty of our Religion which we enjoy, as well by Law as by the happy Continuance of your Majeſty's Protection.

We Humbly Repreſent to Your Majeſty, that the Breaches and Diviſions which are ſo Encreaſed at this Time among Your Majeſty's Subjects, of which Your Majeſty has ſo frequently Complain'd from the Throne, and for Remedy whereof Your Majeſty has ſo much and ſo often recommended *Moderation*, *Union*, and *Peace* among all Your Subjects, have been all along our Affliction, and a ſad Preſage to us of the general Diſtractions of Your Subjects, in which our Dangers are always juſtly to be apprehended. It is our Happineſs, in ſome meaſure, in thoſe Things, that the *preſent Diviſions*, either in their Riſe or Continuance, have not any Concern with us, or with any Thing relating to us, or in which we have any real Concern, AS DISSENTERS. Our Safety and Quiet is always beſt founded in the General Tranquillity of all Your Majeſty's Subjects, ſeeing, as we

have too often found, by ſad Experience, every Party in this Nation, as they have ſtriven to prevail againſt the other, have, in their turn, given us up, and made their Advantages as occaſion has offered them at our Expence; And that our Safety has conſiſted hitherto, next to the wonderful Providence of God, not in our Adhering to this or that Party, but in Your Majeſty's Steady and Religious Obſervance of that Sacred Promiſe often repeated from the Throne, *of preſerving Inviolably to us our Religious Liberties*, upon which Goodneſs of Your Majeſty, our preſent Circumſtances more eſpecially guide us to depend, ſeeing it is evident, that not our Enemies only, but even thoſe who have profeſs'd a great Concern for our Preſervation, appear perfectly Unconcern'd in our Danger; and are ready to joyn, upon any Occaſion, in our Oppreſſion.

If, in thoſe Diviſions aforeſaid, ſome may have Miſrepreſented us to Your Majeſty, as having Abetted and Aſſiſted thoſe who have appear'd in Oppoſition to Your Majeſty's *late*, or *preſent* Meaſures of Government; we moſt humbly beſeech Your Majeſty to give Ear to no ſuch Perſons, to the Prejudice of the *Diſſenters* in General,

neral, for as much as that altho' ſome among us, or who call themſelves *Diſſenters*, may Fooliſhly, Precipitantly, and without our Approbation, have engaged either with Perſons or Parties, in *Matters of State*, yet the *Main Body* of us, your Majeſty's *Diſſenting Subjects*, ſpread into every Corner of Your Dominions, are a quiet, peaceable, and inoffenſive People, Studying to do our own Buſineſs, and perfectly ignorant of, and unconcern'd in the *Strife of Parties*, or the *Breaches of the Publick Peace*, except to Lament them, as Diſaſters to the Nation, and to Deprecate the Evil Conſequences of them to Your Majeſty's beſt and moſt faithful People of all Perſwaſions; endeavouring, in all Caſes, to do our Duty to God and Your Majeſty, as becomes Chriſtians, and faithful Subjects; and deſiring no more, than to Live Quiet and Peaceable Lives under Your Majeſty, whom God and the Laws have made our Rightful Queen and Sovereign, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.

If any ſhall ſuggeſt to Your Majeſty, That we are attach'd to the Intereſt of the *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, and have imbib'd *New Principles* of *Liberty*; The firſt leading to be medling in, and jealous of the Affairs of State, and of Your Majeſty's

jeſty's Adminiſtration: And the other, making us Uneaſie under the Legal Adminiſtration of Your Majeſty's Juſt Authority: We humbly crave leave to Clear our ſelves of both theſe hateful Accuſations, and to repreſent to Your Majeſty, how greatly we are Injur'd by ſuch Calumnies, and in what manner, and to what ends and purpoſes, we are *Miſrepreſented* to Your Majeſty on thoſe Accounts.

We are fully ſatisfy'd by the Proviſion made in the Conſtitution of this Kingdom, at the Time of the late Bleſſed and Glorious Revolution, *viz. The Act of Settlement of the Crown*, 1. *of* William *and* Mary. *Cap.* 1. and in the ſeveral Laws ſubſequent thereunto, to which your Majeſty, and Your Royal Predeceſſors have given the Royal Aſſent; and more particularly, that the Settlement of the Succeſſion to theſe Crowns, after Your Majeſty, *whom we pray God to Preſerve*, is, by the Voice of the Nation, Eſtabliſh'd in the Illuſtrious Princes of the Houſe of *Hanover*; *viz.* The Princeſs *Sophia*, and the Heirs of Her Body; Remainder to their Heirs in Lineal Deſcent, *being Proteſtants*: We believe it to be the Expectation of all Your Majeſty's Kingdoms, That this Succeſſion ſhould, in its due

Time,

Time, take place; and we cannot doubt, but it has ever been agreeable to the Deſigns and Reſolution of Your Majeſty, that all Your Subjects ſhould thus believe; and for any one to ſuggeſt, That by our being Zealouſly Attach'd to the ſaid *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, we ſhould neceſſarily be made jealous of Your Majeſty's Adminiſtration, is an inimitable Affront to, and an horrid Aſſault upon the Honour of Your Majeſty, and the Juſtice of Your Majeſty's Adminiſtration in an Undutiful and Diſloyal manner ſuggeſting, that Your Majeſty would be Offended, that your People ſhould adhere to that *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, wich you had ſo conſtantly Declar'd for; and for the Security whereof ſo many neceſſary and wholeſome Laws had receiv'd the Sanction of your Royal Aſſent; and we cannot be perſwaded, but that when we ſhew our Abhorrence of every Attempt to weaken the Securities of the ſaid *Proteſtant Hanover Succeſſion*, we diſcharge our Duty, not to our Country and Poſterity only, but to your Majeſty, in the beſt manner poſſible, and in the manner, *above all other*, moſt pleaſing and agreeable to your Majeſty, as it is exactly ſuited to what thoſe Laws require, which your Majeſty, as aforeſaid, has paſt, and

particularly

particularly to that Act of UNION aforeſaid, which your Majeſty has declared was eſteemed by Your Self, *as the greateſt Glory and Felicity of your Reign*; and which we have great reaſon to believe your Majeſty eſteem'd ſo, principally becauſe it tended ſo much to the quieting the Minds of your Subjects in both Kingdoms, and reconciled all the dangerous Diſputes which ſeem'd to be in view at that Time among your People, about the ſaid *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, which *Proteſtant Succeſſion* is, by that very Act, render'd Immortal, Unalterable, and no more to be brought into Diſpute among us.

And yet, may it pleaſe your Majeſty, we humbly hope, that as our Adhering to the ſaid *Proteſtant Succeſſion* has been with all Deference and Duty to your Majeſty, who is the only Rightful and Lawful POSSESSOR of the Crown, and whoſe Mild, Gentle, and Merciful Government is the great preſent Felicity of your Subjects; ſo we humbly concieve it is highly conſiſtent with our ſaid Duty to your Majeſty, nay, and is, by the Laws, made a Part of our ſaid Duty, that we ſhould, with the ſame Fidelity that we ſerve your Majeſty, preſerve our Loyalty and Affection for

thoſe who your Majeſty has declared the Apparent Heirs of the Crown, and to whom, by your Aſſent, We and our Poſterity are to be Subject.

As to the unhappy Debates relating to the *Meaſures* of your Majeſty's Adminiſtration, or the Perſons whom your Majeſty has, from time to time, entruſted with the Executive Authority of your Government, we humbly aſſure your Majeſty, we deſire to have no other Concern therein, than to lament that, whether with Cauſe given, or without Cauſe given, the Heats and Animoſities of Parties among your People ſhould be carry'd up to ſuch a Height as to make either your Majeſty *uneaſy in the Poſſeſſion of the Crown*, or your People uneaſy to one another: And we look upon this with the more Regret, as we think our own Share therein very unhappy, ſeeing that whether any of our Body are drawn in, by evil Perſons, to concern themſelves therein farther than is their Duty; or that whether they have done ſo or not, yet we, who have not the leaſt Concern therein, other than as aforeſaid, to deprecate the evil Conſequences thereof to your Majeſty, and your Dominions, are unhappily Sufferers in the Reproach

thereof, which is unjuſtly caſt upon us.

Nor is this all; for if, as we fear, your Majeſty ſhould be ſo far mov'd againſt us, by the Miſbehaviour of ſome few of our Body, who therein we here-by DISOWN, and by no means juſtify or join with; or by the Miſ-Repreſenta-tion of our Enemies, as to Reſent, to our Loſs, the ſaid Miſbehaviour, it would not only be our unſpeakable Diſaſter, and may tend to our Ruin and Deſtruction, as *Diſſenters*, while, at the ſame Time, we humbly aſſure your Majeſty, That as we are guilty of nothing that can Reaſonably move your Majeſty to ſuch Diſpleaſure, ſo we cannot ſuffer that Loſs without the greateſt Wrong and Injuſtice done to us by thoſe who thus maliciouſly repreſent us to your Majeſty, who endeavour thereby to deprive us of your Royal Favour and Protection; and as, with all Humility, we proteſt our Innocencies, ſo we moſt humbly beſeech your Majeſty not to entertain any Apprehenſions of us, the ſaid *Diſſenters*, or of our Behaving in any thing Diſloyally and Undutifully to your Majeſty, upon any Occaſion whatſoever, our utmoſt Deſire in this World being

to

to see your Kingdoms flourish in *Peace* and *Liberty*; the Laws in their free Course; Justice equally administer'd; and all your Subjects United, Easy, and Prosperous, under your Majesty's Government and Protection.

We humbly acknowledge, That we owe to your Majesty's Goodness several Advantages and Priviledges, which the Laws have put Absolutely in your Power to Abridge us of; the long Enjoyment whereof, as it has been a Testimony to us, that we have not been always esteem'd Unworthy of your Majesty's Favour, so has it been a singular Blessing to us, and has given us great Cause to render Thanks to God for your Majesty's Reign, and for Encliming your Royal Heart to such *Moderation* and *Forbearance*; and has endear'd your Majesty to us as Subjects, and caused us to pray with the greatest Sincerity and Affection for your Long and Prosperous Reign over us; and it is the greater Affliction to us to be now Abridg'd of any of those Favours which we have so enjoy'd under your Majesty's Government, because we are not Conscious to our selves of having given the least Provocation to your Majesty to be

diſpleaſed with us, or having been wanting in our Duty to, or Affection for your Perſon and Govenment in any Reſpect whatſoever.

Among the ſaid Advantages which we have Enjoy'd under your Majeſty, as aforeſaid, the Liberty of Teaching and Inſtructing our Children, and Educating them as well in the Knowledge of Letters, as in the Principles of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Underſtanding of their Duty, both to God and your Majeſty, *is not the leaſt*; as, on the other hand, the Liberty of Educating thoſe who are ſet apart for Religious Services, according to our own Way, that a Succeſſion of Godly Miniſters might be preſerv'd to Us, and our Poſterity after Us, *we eſteem the greateſt.* Theſe Privileges however they are not made a Part of the Legal Toleration, which, as aforeſaid, is Eſtabliſhed to us, and that we have Enjoy'd the ſame as the effect of your Majeſty's Goodneſs; yet we humbly Repreſent to your Majeſty, That they are Things ſo Eſſential to, and ſuch neceſſary Conſequences of the Toleration it ſelf, that we cannot but believe, that we have enjoy'd the ſame with your Majeſty's *good pleaſure*; and as the Conſequences

of

of theſe Promiſes aforeſaid, which your Majeſty was ſo often pleas'd to make, of *preſerving the ſaid Toleration Inviolable.*

And, *May it pleaſe Your Majeſty*, we cannot, but with ſad Hearts, look upon all Attempts to deprive us either of a Succeſſion of Miniſters to aſſiſt us in the Worſhip and Service of God, or of Needful Schools, for the Education and Inſtruction of our Children, by which alone the ſaid Toleration can be made Effectual to our Poſterity, as ſo many Conſtructive Invaſions of the ſaid Toleration, which we had ſo much Reaſon to hope ſhould be INVIOLABLY Preſerv'd, ſeeing that any Toleration of the Worſhipping of God, according to our Conſciences, muſt be Imperfect, which does not allow us to have *Miniſters* brought up to Officiate in the ſaid Worſhip. And we Humbly ſuggeſt to your Majeſty, That when we had a Toleration allow'd for Religious Aſſemblies, and a Method therein Preſcribed for the aſſertaining the Quallification of our ſaid Miniſters, and of the Places where they ſhould Excerciſe their Functions, It cannot be ſuppos'd but that the ſaid Miniſters were Tacitly, tho not Explicitly, allow'd to Qualify themſelves by all needful Studies, Acquirements

quirements of Learning, Knowledge of Religion, and the like, for the Holy Office, for which they were to be Seperated and Inducted.

Likewiſe we humbly Repreſent to your Majeſty, The Sad and Lamentable Caſe of our Families and Poſterity, if the Education of our Children be taken from us, and if we are deprived of the Advantage of Schools for the Inſtruction of our ſaid Children in the Knowledge of Letters, and in the Principles of the *Chriſtian Religion*; in which Caſe, as your Majeſty is not only the Nurſing Mother of a Great and Populous Nation, but is not a Stranger to the Affection of a *Natural Mother* to *Children* of her own Body; we humbly appeal to your *Majeſty* to judge in our Behalf, what an inexpreſſible Affliction it muſt be to ſo many Thouſand Families of your Subjects, who NOT BEING ABLE from ſincere Scruples of *Conſcience*, and for no Wicked, Factious, and Dividing Principles, as our Enemies falſly ſuggeſt, to ſuffer our *Children* to be brought up in the *Church of England*, ſhould be therefore deprived of all Opportunities of Giving them ſuch Learning, and ſuch Education, and Inſtruction as is

neceſſary

neceſſary to fit them for their Reſpective Employments, and as may fit them, as aforeſaid, for the Service of God, your Majeſty, and their Country.

We know it is wickedly ſuggeſted, That we have the *Toleration* only as a preſent Exemption from the Puniſhment of the Laws then in Force, and that it was not the Intent and Meaning of the ſaid *Toleration*, that we ſhould propagate the Separation to our Poſterity; and we find ſome who have endeavour'd, tho' very weakly, by their Writings, to perſwade us, That it is our Duty, altho' we cannot our ſelves conform, yet to breed up our Poſterity in Principles of *Conformity* to the *Church of England*: But, *Madam*, your *Majeſty* muſt have very mean Thoughts of the Sincerity of our Principles; and our Enemies might, with much more Juſtice than now they can, tax us with Hypocriſy, and with being not really Conſcientious *Diſſenters*, if at the ſame Time that Profeſſing our ſelves not able to Conform to the Worſhip and Government of the *Church of England*, we, on meer Scruples of Conſcience ſeparated from her Communion; and yet, at the ſame Time, could Educate our Children in that

Way

Way which we could not join in our ſelves.

If, *Madam*, we did not believe that it is our indiſpenſable Duty to Serve and Worſhip God in that Way, which is, in our Opinion, moſt agreeable to his Revealed Will, and if we did not believe that the Worſhip, Ceremonies, *&c.* which we Diſſent from, are not moſt agreeable to the ſaid Will of God, we could not have any juſtifiable Reaſon for our Diſſent: But, *Madam*, while we are perſwaded, That the Way in which we Serve and Worſhip God, without making any Reflections, is, as aforeſaid, the moſt agreeable to the Word of God, which is his Revealed Will; and that therefore we think our ſelves bound in Duty to adhere thereto; your *Majeſty* would moſt juſtly condemn us, as being without all Sincerity, and meer Hypocritical *Diſſenters*; or, on the other Hand, as being without Natural Affections to our Children, eſpecially without Affection to their Souls, if we could ſo far neglect them as to Educate them in ſuch a Worſhip which we did believe was not the moſt agreeable to God's Will; ſo that, *Madam*, we humbly Repreſent, That either we muſt ceaſe to be

Diſſenters,

Diſſenters, or ceaſe to be moved with an Affectionate Concern for the Souls of our Children; or we muſt think our ſelves bound, both by the Laws of God and Nature, to inſtruct them in the *Chriſtian Religion* in the ſame manner, and in the ſame Principles as we our ſelves profeſs it.

And we humbly lay the Conſideration of this Caſe before your *Majeſty*, (*viz.*) Whether Abridging us of the Liberty of Educating our Children, and of Inſtructing them in the ſame Principles of the *Chriſtian Religion*, and in the ſame manner of Worſhip and Practice which we believe to be beſt and moſt agreeable to the Will of God, is not our indiſpenſable Duty, which we cannot go from, and may not omit, on Pain of God's Vengeance, and moſt Righteous Judgment, both here and for ever; which, if it be True, as we believe, we cannot upon any Terms, comply with, without Sin; or our Enemies impoſe upon us, without being guilty of manifeſt Perſecution; which, according to the Declaration of ſeveral late Parliaments, is Voted to be contrary to the Principles of the *Chriſtian Religion*, and

to the Practice of the *Church of England* in particular.

We humbly crave your *Majeſty's* Pardon, if, with the greateſt Deference to your *Majeſty's* known Clemency, and that Compaſſionate Merciful Temper with which, it is known, you have always treated your Subjects, we lay before your *Majeſty* ſomething of the Nature and Conſequences of ſuch Perſecuting Laws as either have been in Force in this Nation, or as may be made or reviv'd by any Influence which our Enemies may have in Time Coming, to the Prejudice of the *Diſſenters*; and humbly to expoſtulate, not with your *Majeſty*, but with all thoſe who miſrepreſent us to your *Majeſty*, in Order to bring us under your Diſpleaſure, and to deſtroy the Intereſt we have had in your *Majeſty's* Protection.

May it pleaſe your Majeſty: We are far from Repreſenting our ſelves as a Body, either Formidable to our Enemies, or Dangerous to the State, on any Account. We are many in Number indeed, but without the leaſt appearance of a Body. We, on all Occaſions, covet to be, as we really are, under the Protection of no Humane Power but that

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of your *Majeſty*, and the *Laws*: Our Enemies cannot accuſe us of being in any Concert one with another, no not ſo much as what ought to be for maintaining the needful Correſpondence among our ſelves for the Conduct of our Religious Intereſt. We are not Seperated from, but are promiſcuouſly Scatter'd among all your *Majeſty's* Subjects, and in all Parts of your Dominions; we have no publick Leaders, publick Heads, publick Stock, or publick Strength, nor do we ever ſeek any; but are entirely Naked and Defenceleſs; Diſconcerted, Divided from one another, and too much Uneaſie one with one another. The Scandal of ſo much as Thinking our ſelves Powerful, much leſs of Being So in reality, will not lie againſt us, even our Enemies themſelves being Judges: So that all the Suggeſtions which have been made, *of our being Dangerous to the State*, are ſo evidently Malicious, and without Weight, that we are under no Apprehenſions that your *Majeſty* will, or can be Impoſed upon in that Caſe about us.

On the Contrary, Our Enemies find it but too eaſie, on all Occaſions, to Oppreſs and Invade us; and had not the Honour and Veracity of your *Majeſty* in-

terpos'd, your *Majeſty* is witneſs for us, how often they would, and eaſily could have finiſhed our Ruin, and diſſolved the Act of Toleration, which is the Foundation of the Liberty we enjoy; and we, on the other hand, are witneſſes to Poſterity, how Conſtantly and Steadily your *Majeſty* has Maintain'd us in the Enjoyment of our Religious Liberties; and Preſerv'd us from the Danger of an *Unchriſtian Perſecution*; which Protection, we, on all Occaſions, have expreſs'd our Senſe of, and Thankfulneſs to your *Majeſty* for, and are not Conſcious that we have Willingly, or as *Diſſenters*, done any thing to forfeit.

Nor have our Enemies only found it eaſie to Oppreſs us, and to Cruſh us with Limitations and Reſtrictions, ſuch as the Laws of Tolleration have left but too much room for: But even thoſe People who we are Reproach'd with Serving, and for adhering to whom, in Civil Affairs, we have been Miſrepreſented to your *Majeſty*, have, on all Occaſions, aſſiſted our ſaid Enemies to take from us all power of making our ſelves Conſiderable in the ſaid Civil Affairs, by entirely diſabling us to appear in Publick Matters, removing us from all the Advantages of

Magiſtracy

Magiſtracy in Towns, or Offices in the Court, whereby we might be capable by our Numbers, to give any weight on one Side or on the other; in doing which however, they have, tho' perhaps againſt their will, done us this Favour, That being ſo entirely under their Foot, with reſpect to Power, the Charge of *being Dangerous*, either to *Church* or *State*, can never more be brought againſt us.

All Pretences therefore *of our Suggeſting the ill Conſequences of theſe Things, as the Effect of our Strength or Number*, being thus Remov'd, we, in the Humbleſt manner poſſible, Repreſent to your *Majeſty*, the evil Conſequences of any Laws which ſhall, or may be Made to Suppreſs us, to Perſecute us, or to Abridge us of the juſt Liberty which we Enjoy.

And *Firſt*, We Humbly Repreſent, How great a Breach ſuch Things muſt neceſſarily make of that Peace and Union among all your *Majeſty's* Subjects, which was, in a great meaſure, compaſs'd by the Toleration; which your *Majeſty* has ſo earneſtly and ſo often Recommended to all your People from the Throne; and which, however, by Heats and Animoſities of another Nature, and by the Warmth

Warmth and Intemperate Conduct of Men of all Sides and Parties, it is Interrupted; yet, bleſſed be God, there is room to hope, and expect, it might be yet obtain'd under your *Majeſty's* mild and merciful Adminiſtration.

It cannot but be a Grief to all your *Majeſty's* good Subjects, who wiſh to ſee the whole Nation United in Affection to your *Majeſty*, and in Zeal for the Publick Safety; to find that to the preſent unhappy breaches, which too much agitate the Minds of your Subjects, and which break in upon the Peace of Societies, Neighbourhood, and even of Families, about State Affairs, which few rightly Underſtand, ſhould be added, the Reviv'd Rancour and Animoſity, which ſo long, and with ſo many evil effects, Diſtracted this Nation, for Fifty Years before the *Revolution*, upon Differences in Religion; all which the Charity and Forbearance of the *Church* of *England*, and the Satisfaction which the *Diſſenters* reap'd in an Uninterupted *Tolleration*, had happily laid a ſleep, and which began, on Both Sides, to be forgotten among us.

Your *Majeſty* has had many Examples of the Follies committed on Both Sides in thoſe Days, to the Uneaſineſs of the

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Government, and the great Diſquiet of the Nation, from the Heat and the Oppreſſion of *perſecuting Penal Laws* Immoderately Executed on one hand, and from the Immoderate Zeal of thoſe, who by thoſe unjuſt Preſſures, and the various ſorts of Violence which they ſuffer'd, have rather been Driven farther off from the Church, than Reduc'd to its Obedience on the other hand.

We Humbly leave it to your *Majeſty's* Conſideration, and believe that your *Maſty's* Experience cannot but join with us in it, That the Perſecution of *Diſſenters* in the former Reigns, did not only fail in the End propos'd (*viz.*) *Of Reducing them to a Conformity to the Church*; but, on the contrary, rather Encreas'd the Numbers of the *Diſſenters* in your Dominions; Many Families of *Moderate People*, tho' before of the *Church* of *England*, being fill'd with ſuch Averſions to the Violences offered to Conſcience, which they thought Unchriſtian; and with Compaſſion for the Sufferings of others, as thereby to believe the Sufferers the *beſt Chriſtians*, and came over to them accordingly. On the other hand, It ſeems to be out of Queſtion, That, ſa ing the benefit of our Liberty, which

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we are thankful to God and your *Majeſty* for, the Numbers, and Intereſt of the *Diſſenters* has been far from Encreaſing, or Gaining Ground by the ſaid *Toleration*.

We acknowledge, *Madam*, That taking away the Schools and Accademies of the *Diſſenters*, is not an immediate Depriving us of the *Toleration*; tho' it Abridges us of thoſe Appendices of Liberty, which we enjoy'd as Conſequences of the *Tolleration*, as aforeſaid; and that we are not thereby abridg'd of Educating our Youth, and preſerving a Succeſſion of Miniſters, by ſending them into Foreign Parts, and bringing them up in the Schools and Univerſities of other Countries. But we humbly Repreſent to your *Majeſty*, That theſe Things cannot but fill us with juſt Apprehenſions, that farther Hardſhips may be prepared, and deſign'd for us; and that thoſe who can be ſo Unjuſt to us, as to Inſinuate, *That we are Dangerous to your Majeſty's Intereſt, unworthy of your Royal Favour, or Protection, and not to be Oblig'd wtih ſuch Advantages, as by your Majeſty's Goodneſs we have Enjoy'd*, will not fail, as far as poſſible, upon all Occaſions, to Incenſe your *Majeſty* againſt us, and to prepoſſeſs your

your *Majeſty* ſo far in our Prejudice, as to make other, and farther Hardſhips and Reſtraints upon us to ſeem Neceſſary; and at laſt, to bring upon us a Repeal even of the *Tolleration* it ſelf, and a Return of all the former Violences of Perſecution, under which we, and our immediate Progenitors have ſo deeply Suffer'd already.

We farther Repreſent to your *Majeſty*, That as it may be True, that we may, as aforeſaid, ſend our Children, for Education and Inſtruction to Foreign Parts, whereby the Succeſſion of our Miniſters may be preſerv'd: Yet that this confirmes our Apprehenſions, as aforeſaid, That our Enemies will not reſt here, but are reſolved if poſſible to puſh on their Deſigns againſt us, to our entire Ruin, and to the deveſting us of the Privilege of the *Tolleration* its ſelf, as aforeſaid; ſince otherwiſe, the Eaſineſs of our bringing up young Miniſters Abroad, whereby our Succeſſion of Miniſters is ſecur'd, and that thereby the End of the preſent Deſign will be defeated, ſhould be a forcible Reaſon againſt their proceeding againſt us in this Manner, as being a Thing perfectly ineffectual, and not capable of anſwering what is propos'd by it, (*viz.*)

of Putting an End to what they call the Schiſm.

And yet, on the other Hand, we cannot but Repreſent to your Majeſty, That our Educating our Youth Abroad is many Ways injurious not to our Families only, but to the Publick Stock of the Kingdom, Cauſing great Numbers of Youth to ſettle in Foreign Parts, and never return at all, to the Leſſening the Numbers of your People; and Cauſing great Sums of Money to be Yearly expended in Foreign Countries, to the manifeſt Loſs of our Own.

But we humbly lay our ſelves at your Majeſty's Feet, in Behalf of the Poſterity of our Poorer Brethren, whoſe Families being large, and Subſiſtence ſmall, are not able to ſupport the Expence of Foreign Education; and who yet being reſtrain'd by the ſame Principle of Conſcience by which they Diſſent, and not able, with Satisfaction, to breed up their Children under *Church of England* Tutors and School-Maſters, will be thereby oblig'd to content themſelves with Keeping them at Home, and Bringing them up with that little Family-Inſtruction which they

they are able to give them, to *the* great Scandal of their Country, the Diſcouragement of Litterature, and, in Conſequence thereof, the Abounding of Ignorance, which is the Mother of Error and Confuſion.

For theſe and many other Reaſons, we humbly Supplicate your Majeſty to take our Caſe into your Royal Conſideration: We beſeech, and, with all Humility, entreat your Majeſty to conſider us and our Innocent Poſterity, who are Repreſented as Enemies to your Majeſty before they are yet Born, or before they know their Right Hands from their Left, in the Offences which our Enemies ſuggeſt as the Reaſon of their preſent Proceeding againſt us.

We humbly plead with your Majeſty, That if, as is ſuggeſted, ſome of us may have unwarily failed in their Duty, and in their miſtaken Zeal for the Nation's Liberties, may have fallen in too much with, and gone too far in the Party-Diſputes, which now embarraſs the Publick Affairs; which Steps of theirs, we, as aforeſaid, utterly diſlike, and Daily blame them for; that yet, on the contrary, the main Body of *Diſſenters* are your Ma-

jeſty's Faithful Subjects, Steady in your Intereſt, and Depending upon the Juſtice and Faithfulneſs of your Majeſty, for the Safety and Preſervation of their Liberties, *Proteſtant* Religion, *Proteſtant* Succeſſion, and the Publick Good of their Country againſt all the *Popiſh* Intereſts, Princes, and Pretenders in the World.

We humbly plead, Madam, That, to the utmoſt of our Power, we have been Aſſiſtant to bear the Burthen of Long and Expenſive Wars, in Defence of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, and againſt *Popiſh* and *French Tyranny*; We have ſpent our Blood and Eſtates in the Service of your Majeſty, and our Country; have Fought and Paid as Far and as Faithfully, in Proportion, as our Brethren of the *Church*; and *Pardon us, Madam, to ſay*, That we were in Hopes our ſaid Brethren would not have envyed or prevented us in Enjoying with them the Bleſſings and Comforts of *Peace*; and we cannot but think our ſelves unkindly treated by them who envy us our Share in the Happineſs of your Majeſty's Reign, *which, we pray God may be Long and Proſperous*, on Pretence of

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our being Diſloyal to your Majeſty, and Dangerous to your Government, to preſerve which, there are ſo many among us left Fatherleſs, Widows, Childleſs, and maim'd both in Families and Perſons, by the Long and Faithful Services which we have perform'd in your Majeſty's Armies and Navies.

We moſt humbly ſupplicate your Majeſty, That as we are not Conſcious of any Crime, and that our worſt Enemies cannot charge us, as *Diſſenters*, with Acting any Thing contrary or inconſiſtent with your Majeſty's Intereſt, or our Duty to your Majeſty, ſo our Enemies may not prevail with your Majeſty to withdraw your Protection or Favour from us.

We beſeech your Majeſty, That as our Years of Peace are to begin at this Period; the Ruin of our Religious Liberties may not be dated from the ſame *Epocha* with the Enjoyment of our Civil Liberties; and that our Children may not date the Perſecution they ſhall ſuffer from the very ſame Year of your Reign from which the Nation dates their *Quiet* and *Tranquillity*; that we may not mourn when all the reſt of your Subjects rejoyce; and

that

that your Majeſty, who, we are aſſured, wiſhes for nothing more than the Proſperity of all your People, may not have the Diſappointment to ſee a conſtant Series of Afflictions entailed upon more than a Million of innocent People, your Subjects; and their Days made miſerable by Perſecution and Proſecution, for the meer Profeſſion of Religion, and Preſerving their Conſciences free from Impoſitions of Human Invention.

Laſtly, We humbly entreat your Majeſty to pardon the Freedom of this Supplication, and of All concern'd therein, there being no Meaning or Deſign therein, but to obtain from your Majeſty, That no Act may obtain your Royal Aſſent, which may leſſen the Religious Privileges of your Faithful Subjects, the DISSENTERS; Abridge them of the Liberties and of the happy Quiet of their Conſciences, in the matters of Religion which they now enjoy; or may reſtrain them from Inſtructing their Children in the Fear and Knowledge of God, and of their Duty to your Majeſty; to be depriv'd whereof, would reduce us to the greateſt Perplexities and Difficulties imaginable.

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God preſerve your Majeſty's valuable Life; and make your Reign Long and Proſperous; grant you Peace and Victory over all the Enemies of your Perſon and Government, and inſpire your Majeſty with Divine Grace, That you may exalt Religion, Honour, the King of Heaven, Eſtabliſh Peace, Charity, and a Reconciliation of Parties among all your People; to the Glory of your Majeſty's Reign, and the Laſting Comfort of the whole Nation, is the United Prayer of all your Majeſty's *Faithful* and *Peaceable Proteſtant Subjects* throughout your Dominions, and, in a particular manner, of

The *Diſſenters.*

F I N I S.